

• NEPA/EIS FACT SHEET •

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969.

What is NEPA?

The purposes of NEPA are to:

- Encourage harmony between man and the environment;
- Promote efforts to prevent or eliminate environmental damage; and
- Enrich man's understanding of important ecological systems and natural resources.

NEPA requires that the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS):

- Consider the potential consequences of its decisions (major federal actions) on the human environment before deciding to proceed; and
- Provide opportunities for public involvement, which include: participating in scoping, reviewing the Draft and Final EIS, and attending public meetings.

NEPA does not dictate the decision to be made by NMFS, but informs the decision-making process.

What is an EIS?

An EIS evaluates the actions that a federal agency plans to undertake with respect to the potential impacts of these actions on the human environment. The purpose of this EIS is to objectively analyze and evaluate the potential impacts on environmental resources from activities conducted under the Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program (MMHSRP).

The EIS will include descriptions of the:

- Proposed Action
- Purpose and need for the Proposed Action
- Alternatives to the Proposed Action
- Affected environment
- Environmental consequences of the Proposed Action and alternatives
- Required mitigation or recommended best management practices (BMPs)

What environmental resources are normally considered during an EIS?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fish and Wildlife <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Protected Species <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Threatened and Endangered Species > Marine Mammals > Migratory Birds – Non-protected Species • Protected and Sensitive Habitats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – National Marine Sanctuaries – Essential Fish Habitat – Designated Critical Habitat – Vegetation • Coastal Zone Management • Geology and Soils | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air Quality • Water Quality • Noise • Aesthetics • Human Health and Safety • Socioeconomics and Tourism • Public Services • Cultural Resources • Environmental Justice • Treaty Rights • Federal Trust Responsibilities • Cumulative Impacts |
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Photo by NOAA Fisheries

The EIS Process

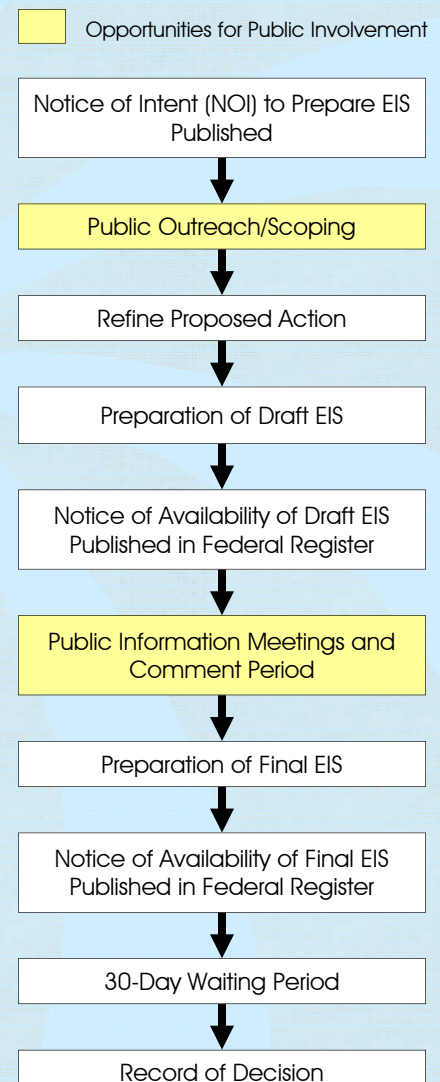


Photo by Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies

